

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the Claims as follows. Insertions are shown underlined while deletions are ~~struck through~~. Please cancel Claims 6-10, 15, and 17-19. Please add Claim 21.

1 (currently amended): A method for reducing wrinkles on skins ~~stimulating cell growth~~ comprising:

~~administering~~ applying to the skins of a candidate a sponge protein hydrolysate which is a product by acidic hydrolysis of sponge skeleton fibers (spongin fibers) obtained from refined sponges as the raw material ~~without using a protein hydrolase, in an amount effective to reduce wrinkles on the skills~~, said product having (i) a molecular weight of less than 5,000, with light coloring, and (ii) a human cell growth stimulating activity on human fibroblasts.

2 (original): The method according to Claim 1, wherein the sponge protein is a sponge protein solution.

3 (original): The method according to Claim 2, wherein the sponge protein solution has a concentration of about 0.01% to about 15% by weight.

4 (currently amended): The method according to Claim 1, wherein the sponge protein hydrolysate is administrated in the form of ~~food-product materials, pet-food materials, cosmetics, or medicinal products~~.

5 (original): The method according to Claim 1, wherein the protein hydrolysate has a growth stimulating effect on cells derived from mammals.

6-10 (canceled)

11 (original): The method according to Claim 1, wherein the sponge protein hydrolysate is a product of hydrolysis carried out using an acidic solution in which the pH is adjusted to 1 using electrolytic acidic water with a pH of less than 2.5 and an oxidation-reduction potential of more than 1,000 mV admixed with an acid to obtain sponge proteins having a molecular weight of less than 5,000, using sponge skeleton fibers (spongin fibers) refined from sponges as the raw material.

12 (original): The method according to Claim 11, wherein the sponge protein hydrolysate is a lightly colored solution having a concentration of 1 to 30% by weight.

Appl. No. : 11/736,067  
Filed : December 15, 2003

13 (original): The method according to Claim 2, wherein the solution has growth stimulating activity on human epidermal keratinocytes.

14 (original): The method according to Claim 13, wherein the solution has a concentration of more than 0.00625% by weight.

15 (canceled)

16 (currently amended): The method according to Claim 1, wherein the skins are growth stimulating activity is reducing wrinkle on human skins.

17-19 (canceled)

20 (original): The method according to Claim 2, wherein the solution has a concentration of about 0.1% to 15% by weight.

21 (new): The method according to Claim 1, wherein the spongin fibers are obtained from sponges of *Spongia* which belongs to Porifera.